



Flanders
State of the Art

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY

**FLANDERS
CHANCELLERY &
FOREIGN OFFICE**

www.fdfa.be/en

The establishment of a Diplomatic Academy at the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office was a promise set out in the Flemish Coalition Agreement 2019-2024. It is part of Flanders' ambition to strengthen its diplomacy and was incorporated in the department's Business Plan for 2022.

The Diplomatic Academy's first training programme started on 1 April 2022. In the summer of 2023, the first batch of nine laureates graduated. Most of them joined Flanders' diplomatic service in September. 2023 also saw a gradual broadening of the course catalogue and participant base.

FIGURES

In 2023, the Diplomatic Academy offered 64 learning activities on 43 subjects. Together, they accounted for just under 250 learning hours spread over 59 teaching days. The full calendar for 2023 can be found in the appendix.

64 LEARNING ACTIVITIES

43 SUBJECTS

The Diplomatic Academy offered **64 learning activities** on **43 different subjects**.

250 LEARNING HOURS spread over **59** TEACHING DAYS

THE WHOLE CALENDAR FOR 2022 IS TO BE FOUND IN THE ANNEX

DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS

In the same period, **six colleagues** completed **two weeks** each of practical training during internships at **Flanders' diplomatic representation to the European Union**.



Almost all training activities took place in Brussels. The programme also included six working days of field visits to key stakeholders (city councils, ports, universities, sector federations, museums, innovation clusters, etc.) in Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, Leuven and Ostend.



Prospective diplomats visiting the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp (15 May 2023)

TRAINING

In-house experts were used on five occasions to provide training, but in most cases external experts and training providers were called upon.

In 2023, the Diplomatic Academy engaged about 40 external trainers/lecturers from ToonT BV, United Nations University - Centre for Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS, Bruges), Diplomatische Akademie Wien, Ghent University, Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, Embassy of Mozambique in Brussels, ECT, Scriptorij, European Institute for Public Affairs

(EIPA, Maastricht), Tybeert, çavaria, Vlamingen in de Wereld, Brussels Diplomatic Academy (VUB), the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, University of Antwerp, Delft University of Technology and the Geneva Institute of Geopolitical Studies (GIGS).

Our November programme included a selection of online lectures from the UNU-CRIS' "School of Modern Diplomacy"* curriculum. A special word of thanks goes to UNU-CRIS.



Half of all learning activities (**49%**) could be attended **online**, versus **80% in class**. **On-site attendance** amounted to **35%**; **online attendance** to **65%**.

The majority of lessons were given in **Dutch**; about **one third** in **English**.

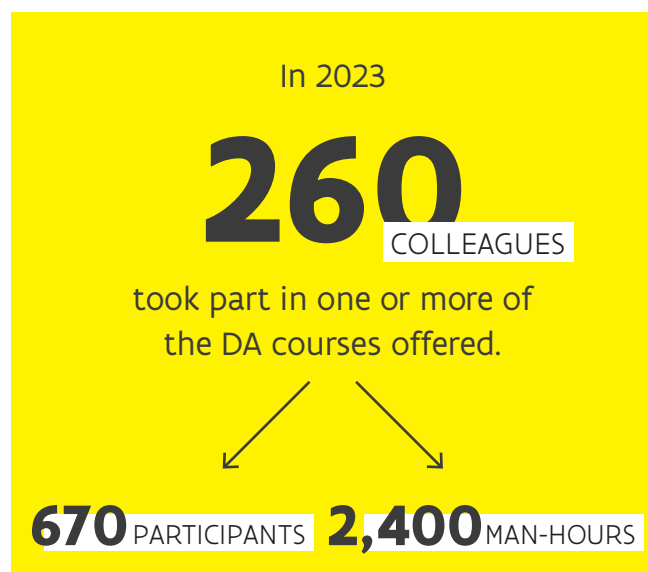
Trainers and lecturers came not only from **Flanders** but also from **Austria**, the **Basque Country**, the **Czech Republic**, **Germany**, **Hungary**, **Mozambique**, the **Netherlands**, **Poland**, **Switzerland**, the **United Kingdom** and **Wallonia**.

More than a **third** of the lecturers were **women** and less than **two thirds** were **men**.

Screenshot of UNU-CRIS' lecture "Leadership in international relations: toolkits for modern diplomats" (9 November 2023)



PARTICIPANTS



In 2023, more than half of all registered participants were colleagues from other bodies of Flanders' Administration. Staff from the Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office nevertheless accounted for 70% of all training courses and 85% of all teaching hours taken. But these figures show that staff members from other departments and agencies too found their way to the Diplomatic Academy. In 2023, they accounted for just under a third of all participations, and 15% of training hours taken.

The extent to which different groups of staff participated is shown below.

DA - 2023	# Participants	%	# Courses	%	# Hours	%
FLANDERS CHANCELLERY & FOREIGN OFFICE (FCFO)						
Diplomatic representatives	12	4.6	39	5.8	71	2.9
Prospective diplomats	9	3.5	204	30.4	1,198.5	49.9
Other staff abroad	14	5.4	26	3.9	51.5	2.1
Subtotal of staff abroad	35	13.5	269	40.1	1321	55.0
Headquarters-based staff	86	33.0	193	28.8	721.25	30.0
Total FCFO	115*	44.2	462	68.9	2,042.25	85
FLANDERS INVESTMENT & TRADE (FIT)						
Staff abroad	76	29.2	96	14.3	119.5	5.0
Domestic staff	29	11.2	50	7.5	102.5	4.2
Total FIT	105	40.4	146	21.8	222	9.2
OTHER BODIES (FLANDERS' ADMINISTRATION)						
Departments and Agencies	34	13.1	54	8.0	99	4.1
Other	6	2.3	8	1.2	40.5	1.7
OVERALL TOTAL	260	100	670	99.9	2,402.25	100

*This figure is correct. Although not the exact sum of the above figures. Internal mobility generates double counting in this column. This was ironed out.

THE “MARIE BELPAIRE” BATCH

In 2023, a first batch of nine new diplomats for Flanders successfully completed the Diplomatic Academy's training programme. They called themselves the “Marie Belpaire” group.

In September, they were dispatched to Flanders' diplomatic representations to the EU (Brussels), and in Berlin, Lilongwe, Maputo, Paris and Pretoria.



The laureates of this batch were handed out their certificates by the Minister-President of the Government of Flanders on 10 July 2023 at Errerahuis.

ORGANISATION

In 2023, the Diplomatic Academy could count on the highly valued cooperation of colleagues from the Agency for Government Personnel (AgO) and the Agency for Facility Operations (HFB) for practical and administrative support. Their support was crucial to the smooth running of all operations.

The practical organisation of the programme generally went smoothly. Only one programmed session had to be postponed due to one of the teachers' late and sudden unavailability.

The field visits to key stakeholders in Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels, Leuven and Ostend were prepared and coordinated by the department's Stakeholder Management Team.

The practical organisation of all internships was in the hands of the Diplomatic Representation of Flanders to the European Union.

Finally, a number of training modules were prepared by our department's Development Cooperation Team and Foreign Offices Support Team. These sessions aim to prepare for life as an expat (residency legislation, security, health, etc.) or zoom in on the practical management of our missions abroad and the internal policy and budget cycle of Flanders' development cooperation.

All learning activities of the Diplomatic Academy were programmed and managed through Vlimpers Leren, AgO's Learning Management System.

The Diplomatic Academy owes many thanks to all aforementioned teams and agencies.

BUDGET

The 2023 programme of the Diplomatic Academy was organised at a cost of over 50,000 euros. Since the 2023 programme did not include any internships abroad, this amount is significantly lower than the previous year.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

2023 saw further attempts to shape international cooperation with foreign homologues. Cooperation with the Polish Diplomatic Academy was further fleshed out. Colleagues from our department gave a presentation on Flanders' foreign policy to Polish diplomats in training, who were visiting Brussels. As keynote speaker at the 2023 Flanders Diplomatic Days, Poland's Permanent Representative to NATO addressed the entire Flanders Diplomatic Corps. Also, experts and topics were exchanged for inclusion in the respective 2024 programmes.

New contacts were established with diplomatic academies of other countries with a view to exploring cooperation opportunities. Cooperation between the Diplomatic Academies of Flanders and Taiwan was enshrined in the 2023-2024 Working Programme between both parties, signed during their Permanent Joint Commission in Taipei in April.

In summer 2023, our department - together with the Flemish Parliament and Flanders Investment & Trade - contributed to the Young Diplomats Forum in Brussels. This programme is hosted on a regular basis by the London-based Global Diplomatic Forum.



Keynote speech of the Permanent Representative of Poland to NATO during Flanders' Diplomatic Days (21 September 2023)



Young Diplomats Forum (Flemish Parliament, 7 July 2023)

GLOBAL
DIPLOMATIC
FORUM



ANNEX

Date	Learning activity	Class	Online	#Participants	Hours
04.01.2023	Making videos with smartphone	9		9	7
05.01.2023	Making videos with smartphone (extra session)	6		6	7
09.01.2023	Intercultural communication skills (part 1)		16	16	3
12.01.2023	Intercultural communication skills (part 2)		15	15	3
18.01.2023	Public speaking (extra session)	9		9	6.5
19.01.2023	Exchange of views with the ambassador of Mozambique	9		9	1.75
19.01.2023	European institutions (part 1)	12		12	4
20.01.2023	European institutions (parts 2 and 3)	11		11	7
20.01.2023	Lecture by the President of the European Court of Justice	29		29	1.5
26.01.2023	Flanders' interaction with EU institutions: the practice	5	3	8	3
27.01.2023	Life as an expat (part 1)	5	4	9	3
30.01.2023	Flanders' interaction with EU institutions: the practice (extra session)	2		2	2
03.02.2023	International relations after 1648	6	2	8	2
10.02.2023	Human Rights and the Government of Flanders' foreign policy	13	17	30	2.5
11.02.2023	Life as an expat (part 2)	14		14	3.5
13.02.2023	Diplomatic Law (part 1)	8	2	10	3
14.02.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 1)	8	2	10	3
16.02.2023	Speech writing (extra session)	9	1	10	7
20.02.2023	Diplomatic Law (part 2)	8	2	10	3
27.02.2023	Diplomatic Law (part 3)	8	2	10	3
28.02.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 2)	7	2	9	3
02.03.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 3)	8	2	10	3
07.03.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 4)	8	2	10	3
13.03.2023	Diplomatic Law (part 4)	8	2	10	3
14.03.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 5)	8	2	10	3
16-24.03.2023	European institutions (extra session)	1		1	22
21.03.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 6)	8	2	10	3
23.03.2023	Visual communication with PowerPoint (extra session)	1		1	3
24.03.2023	Time Management (extra session)		1	1	3
28.03.2023	Protocol & Etiquette (part 7)	8	2	10	3
30.03.2023	Domicile Law		16	16	1
04.04.2023	Diplomatic Law (part 5)	8	2	10	3
27.04.2023	Making videos with smartphone (extra session)	1		1	7
04.05.2023	Life as a diplomat - interview with the secretary-general		8	8	1.5
15.05.2023	Field visits to key stakeholders in Antwerp	8		8	7.5
16.05.2023	Field visits to key stakeholders in Antwerp	8		8	7.5

Date	Learning activity	Class	Online	#Participants	Hours
30.05.2023	Briefing on security aspects abroad (part 1)	10		10	7
31.05.2023	Briefing on security aspects abroad (part 2)	10		10	4
01.06.2023	Diplomacy today	8	2	10	3
02.06.2023	Accounting in our diplomatic missions	7	2	9	1.5
02.06.2023	Briefing on health aspects abroad	4		4	1
07.06.2023	Field visits to key stakeholders in Brussels	8		8	7.5
08.06.2023	Field visits to key stakeholders in Leuven	9		9	7.5
09.06.2023	Reception at Wallonie-Bruxelles International	9		9	2
19.06.2023	Reception at Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs	10		10	2
22.06.2023	Field visits to key stakeholders in Ghent	8		8	7.5
23.06.2023	Field visits to key stakeholders in Ostend	8		8	7.5
27.06.2023	OS - Monitoring, Evaluation & Risk Management (part 1)	8		8	3
27.06.2023	OS - Monitoring, Evaluation & Risk Management (part 2)	5		5	2
28.06.2023	OS - Auditing & Evaluation (part 1)	11		11	3
28.06.2023	OS - Auditing & Evaluation (part 2)	4		4	2
30.06.2023	Integrity	13		13	3
13.07.2023	Cooperation agreement on regional representatives at federal diplomatic missions		8	8	1.5
Summer break					
23.08.2023	Speech writing (extra session)		1	1	7
21.09.2023	War in Ukraine: implications for EU external policy	117		117	1
19.10.2023	Geopolitics of energy		52	52	1.5
09.11.2023	Leadership in international relations: toolkits for modern diplomats*		40	40	2.5
16.11.2023	Digital Diplomacy: Politics and social media*		26	26	1
16.11.2023	Geopolitical analysis	14		14	3
17.11.2023	Geoeconomics & Geopolitical foresight	14		14	6
30.11.2023	Subnational Diplomacy: transformation of the global diplomatic system*		17	17	1
30.11.2023	Subnational Diplomacy: successful cooperation on the subnational level*		26	26	1
04.12.2023	Clear, concise writing	12		12	3.5
12.12.2023	History of diplomacy	9	18	27	2
Total		551	299	850	246.75

COLOPHON

EDITING:

Diplomatic Academy,
Flanders Chancellery & Foreign Office

EDITION:

January 2024

PUBLISHER:

Julie Bynens, Havenlaan 88 - 1000 Brussel

CONCEPT AND LAYOUT:

The Oval Office

DEPOT NUMBER:

D/2023/3241/468 for Annual Report Diplomatic Academy 2023

